

**PROBLEMS IN SOCIAL CARE.** By RH Corney. (Pp 178. £7.95). Lancaster: MTP Press, 1983.

THIS book has been written primarily for the general practitioner and describes social problems which present in the surgery. Management of these problems is described, both through the doctor's own intervention and by involving or referring the patient on to other agencies.

The author notes the increasing tendency for social workers to be attached to the primary care team and as a result referral, feedback and patient acceptance are facilitated. The close association between social difficulties and health problems both physical and psychiatric is described. The increased numbers of handicapped and elderly in the community along with the tendency to 'medicalise' social problems are the reasons given for social and emotional problems being the second commonest mode of presentation in practice. Sources of help for social problems both voluntary and statutory are listed. The bulk of the book contains chapters on children, problems of adult and family life, the elderly, physically handicapped, mentally handicapped, housing and financial problems. Each page has a margin which summarises the content making reference easy. This book would be particularly helpful for a trainee entering practice and provides a useful reference for the experienced practitioner.

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**THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF PSYCHIATRY.** Edited by Malcolm Weller. (Pp 452. £19.50). London: Baillière Tindall, 1983.

THE practice of psychiatry has been underpinned increasingly over recent years by numerous scientific disciplines. This book presents in attractive form a concise survey of the principal contributions made by these disciplines.

To produce the book the editor has drawn on the expert knowledge of scientists of distinction, not only the more obvious examples of physiology, psychology and neuroanatomy but also pharmacology, genetics and sociology. These contributions, he has blended with chapters written by practicing psychiatrists, who have contributed to research and teaching in relevant aspects of psychiatry.

This book can be recommended as an up-to-date refreshing exercise to all doctors with an interest in psychological medicine. Trainees studying for the Part I membership examination of the Royal College of Psychiatrists will find it filling gaps in their knowledge. Perhaps the cost appears a little on the expensive side for the size of the production, but the high standard throughout should ensure that the serious postgraduate student of psychiatry obtains a personal copy.

WAGMacC

**PSYCHIATRY.** By Sir Wm Trethowan and ACP Sims. Fifth Edition. (Pp 400. £6.95). London: Baillière Tindall, 1983.

ONE of the 'Concise Medical Textbooks' series by the publishers, it presents many basic facts in a very readable manner. The influence of the senior author, former chief examiner in the MRCPsych examinations, pervades the book. His chapters on psychiatric interviewing and mental state are worth re-reading.

For such a small book, up to date forensic aspects are admirably summarised by Professor R Bluglass. These include the Mental Health Act, 1983 (England and Wales) with some of the problems which it causes when trying to accommodate the views of the 'patients' rights' pressure groups. However, in the space available it is impossible to do justice to many aspects of psychiatry. Thus the chapters on the neuroses are sketchy and that on schizophrenia just skims the surface, albeit with some useful nuggets.

At the end of each chapter there are very useful "further reading" suggestions. I would recommend these well-chosen papers. They are required to amplify the chapters on 'alcoholism and drug dependence', 'liaison psychiatry' and 'the psychiatry of old age'.

In summary this book does not set out to be a comprehensive textbook; but at the price it can be recommended to whet the appetite of students and even the more senior doctors to further gleaning of knowledge in psychiatry.

WAGMacC

**INFECTIOUS DISEASES.** By Barbara E Bannister. (Pp 278. Figs 27. £6.95). London: Baillière Tindall, 1983.

ALTHOUGH a good summary of infections commonly encountered in Britain and excellent value, the book duplicates comparable sections in general medical text-books so its purchase may seem extravagant to impecunious undergraduates.

The doctor sharpening his knowledge for an encounter with postgraduate examiners, will find the somewhat telegraphic style more useful. He would certainly benefit from studying the short chapters on hospital infection and post infectious disorders, important clinical, as well as examination, topics that are often overlooked in general texts.

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